

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The claims in this listing will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A video game apparatus that advances a game when multiple players move their player characters in a virtual space, comprising:
  - multiple input devices that correspond to each of the multiple players and receives input instructions for each player character according to an operation of each player;
  - a player character mover that moves each player character in the virtual space based on the input instruction;
  - an object mover that moves an object in the virtual space;
  - a display controller that causes a display device to display a part of the virtual space with reference to the object;
  - a position judge that determines a positional relationship between each player character and the object and demarcates a zone centered around the object with a predetermined radius; and
  - a game progress controller that changes at least one of a degree of advantage of a game progress and a degree of ease for each player character according to the determined positional relationship of each player character,

the display controller causing the display device to display the object at a center and the part of the virtual space with reference to the object.

2. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said position judge determines whether a selected player character is within a predetermined area defined around the object, and said game progress controller changes at least one of the degree of advantage of the game progress and the degree of ease for each player character according to whether the selected player character is within the predetermined area.
3. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said display controller comprises a device that causes said display device to display a predetermined effect on a boundary of the predetermined area.
4. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said display controller further causes said display device to display a predetermined effect on a player character located outside of the predetermined area.
5. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the predetermined area includes multiple areas, each area being defined as a different distance from the object, wherein said position judge determines in which area each player character is located, and said game progress controller changes at least one of the degree of advantage of the game progress and the degree of ease for each player character according to which area each player character is located.

6. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said position judge determines a distance between the position of each player character and the position of the object, and said game progress controller changes at least one of the degree of advantage of the game progress and the degree of ease for each player character based on the determined distance.

7. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a second object mover that moves a second object, having a predetermined shape and including the second object, in synchronization with movement of the second object, wherein said position judge determines whether each player character is located on said second object, and said game progress controller changes at least one of the degree of advantage of the game progress and the degree of ease for each player character based on whether each player character exists on the second object.

8. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a display judge that determines whether each player character is included in a portion displayed by said display; and

an operation instructing device that instructs an operation method of said input devices to move each player character determined as being included in a non-displayed portion to the portion displayed by said display device.

9. (Currently Amended) The video game apparatus according to claim 8, wherein each of said input devices comprises an on-hand portable display device that is different from said display device, and said operation instructing device causes said on-hand display device to display the operation method.
10. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said virtual space is a three-dimensional space, and said display controller comprises a visual axis controller that controls a direction of a visual axis of a virtual camera with reference to the position of the object, a perspective-transformer that perspective-transforms the virtual three-dimensional space onto a virtual screen fixed a distance away from a viewpoint of the virtual camera to generate a two-dimensional image, and an image display controller that causes said display control device to display the two-dimensional image.
11. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:  
a display judge that determines whether each player character is included in a portion perspective-transformed onto the virtual screen; and  
a radar map display controller that displays a two-dimensional radar map showing the position of a selected player character with reference to the position of the object when the selected player character is in a non-displayed portion.
12. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 11, wherein each of said input devices comprises an on-hand display device that is different from said display

device, and said radar map display controller causes said on-hand display device to display the two-dimensional radar map.

13. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said display controller further comprises an obstacle judge that determines whether there is an obstacle between the viewpoint and the object, and a viewpoint mover that moves the position of the viewpoint to a position where there is no obstacle between the viewpoint and the object to control the direction of the visual axis with reference to the position of the object when the obstacle is between the viewpoint and the object.

14. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said display controller further comprises a viewpoint mover that moves the position of the viewpoint to control the direction of the visual axis with reference to the position of the object according to the determined the positional relationship between each player character and the object.

15. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said display controller further comprises a field-of-view changer that changes a field of view of the virtual camera to control the direction of the visual axis with reference to the position of the object according to the determined the positional relationship between each player character and the object.

16. (Previously Presented) The video game apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said visual axis controller controls the direction of the visual axis towards the position of the object, adjusting the direction of the visual axis of the virtual camera so that the object may be shown.

17. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said game progress controller varies an area in which at least one of the degree of advantage of the game progress and the degree of ease is changed according to a degree of the game progress.

18. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said game progress controller differentiates a rate at which at least one of the degree of advantage of the game progress and the degree of ease is changed according to a degree of the game progress.

19. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the degree of advantage of the game progress is changed by changing a status of any player character.

20. (Original) The video game apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the degree of ease of the game progress is changed by changing a visibility of any player character.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) A video game apparatus that advances a game when multiple players move their player characters in a virtual space, said video game apparatus having a memory that stores a game program and a processor that executes said game program and multiple input devices provided to correspond to each of the multiple players, and a display device that displays a processing result of said processor, wherein said game program is stored in said memory and causes said processor to execute:

inputting an instruction to a player character of each player from said multiple input devices;

moving each player character in the virtual space based on the input instruction;

moving an object in the virtual space;

causing the display device to display a part of the virtual space with reference to the moved object;

determining a positional relationship between each moved player character and the object;

demarcating a zone centered around the object with a predetermined radius;

changing at least one of a degree of advantage of a game progress and a degree of ease for each player character according to a determined positional relationship of each player character; and

controlling the display device to display the object at a center and the part of the virtual space with reference to the moved object.

23. (Currently Amended) A video game progress control method for advancing a video game when multiple players move their player characters in a virtual space, comprising:

inputting an instruction to a player character of each player from multiple input devices;

moving each player character in the virtual space based on the input instruction;

moving an object in the virtual space;

causing a display device to display a part of the virtual space with reference to the moved object;

determining a positional relationship between each moved player character and the object;

demarcating a zone centered around the object with a predetermined radius;

changing at least one of a degree of advantage of a game progress and a degree of ease for each player character according to a determined positional relationship of each player character; and

controlling the display device to display the object at a center and the part of the virtual space with reference to the moved object.

24. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which a game program for executing a video game that advances when multiple players move their

player characters in a virtual space is recorded, said game program causing a computer apparatus to execute:

inputting an instruction to a player character of each player from multiple input devices;

moving each player character in the virtual space based on the input instruction;

moving an object in the virtual space;

causing a display device to display a part of the virtual space with reference to the moved object;

determining a positional relationship between each moved player character and the object;

demarcating a zone centered around the object with a predetermined radius;

changing at least one of a degree of advantage of a game progress and a degree of ease for each player character according to a determined positional relationship of each player character; and

controlling the display device to display the object at a center and the part of the virtual space with reference to the moved object.

25. (Currently Amended) A method for executing a video game that advances when multiple players move their player characters in a virtual space, which is superimposed thereon, wherein a game program causes a computer apparatus to execute:

inputting an instruction to a player character of each player from multiple input devices;

moving each player character in the virtual space based on the input instruction;

moving an object in the virtual space;

causing a display device to display a part of the virtual space with reference to the moved object;

determining a positional relationship between each moved player character and the object;

demarcating a zone centered around the object with a predetermined radius;

changing at least one of a degree of advantage of a game progress and a degree of ease for each player character according to a determined positional relationship of each player character; and

controlling the display device to display the object at a center and the part of the virtual space with reference to the moved object,

wherein determining a positional relationship determines whether a selected player character is within a predetermined area defined around the object, and the changing changes at least one of the degree of advantage of the game progress and the degree of ease for each player character according to whether the selected player character is within the predetermined area.